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HUGH D. JAEGER, P.A.
1000 Superior Blvd., Suite 302
Wayzata, MN 55391-1873 U.S.A.
FAX (952) 475-2930
PHONE (952) 475-1880

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DATE: APRIL 28, 2003
TO: EXAMINER LYNNE EDMONDSON
GROUP ART UNIT 1725
MATTER/CLIENT: BRAVEK ET AL (DAKTRONICS)
FACSIMILE NO.: 703-305-7718 (99-360)
TELEPHONE NO.:
FROM: HUGH D JAEGER

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MESSAGE:

*Request for Clarification
Bravek, et al
09/917,483*

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#7 5/2/03
1)

PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of)	
Bravek, et al.)	Examiner Edmondson
Serial Number: 09/917,483)	Group Art Unit 1725
Filed: 07/27/2001)	REQUEST FOR
For: Circuit Board Having)	CLARIFICATION
Improved Soldering)	
Characteristics)	

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

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GROUP 1700REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION

In the most recent Office action mailed April 02, 2003, the Examiner contends that the claims 3-6 submitted by Applicants in their amendment filed January 17, 2003, are directed to an invention that is "independent or distinct" from the invention originally claimed in the original claims 1 and 2 upon which an action on the merits was given, and, therefore, the invention claimed in original claims 1 and 2 was constructively elected and there now are no claims to that invention. As a result, Applicants have been given the opportunity to "supply the omission or correction".

However, for the reasons next set forth, the Examiner's action is not at all understood, and, therefore, Applicants

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respectfully request clarification thereof so that they can take whatever action may be needed, if any, in an attempt to overcome or rectify a deficiency, if indeed there exists a deficiency.

Turning now to a discussion of the Office action and pointing out the specific aspects thereof which are not understood and for which clarification is requested, it is first noted that in the second sentence of paragraph 1 of the Office action, it is stated that "[t]he original claims teach a method of wave soldering, particularly soldering a printed circuit board." This sentence is not understood. First of all, claims do not "teach". Claims recite or specify or set forth, but they do not "teach". More importantly, however, is the fact that only claim 1 is directed to a "method", and only claim 1 specifies "wave soldering". Claim 2 is an article (product) claim directed to the combination of a printed circuit board and a component; and there is no mention therein of wave soldering or any other kind of soldering.

The next portion of the Office action which is not understood is the third sentence of paragraph 1. There it is stated that "[t]he method may be used for soldering boards having a variety [of] structural limitations." This sentence suggests that the method of original claim 1 was directed to soldering a circuit board; but original claim 1 was not directed to soldering a circuit board. Rather, original claim 1 was directed to a process of soldering the leads of a component to a circuit board.

The next portions of the Office action which are not understood are the last two sentences of paragraph 1. There is stated that "[t]he newly submitted claims teach a printed circuit board...which may be formed by means including

adhesive bonding" and that "[t]he new claims do not teach soldering." It is not understood what the relevance of the statement that the claims teach a circuit board which may be formed by adhesive bonding is. Original claim 1 was not directed to making a circuit board, but to a method of wave soldering the leads of a component to a printed circuit board. Adhesive bonding cannot be substituted for wave soldering the leads of a component to a printed circuit board because wave soldering involves electrically conductive material, which is essential for connecting component leads, whereas adhesive bonding involves electrically insulating (non-conductive) material. The new claims 3-6 all include recitations involving a solder station, and, in addition, claim 5 specifies that the leads of a component are "soldered to the solder stations".

Continuing, the next aspect of the Office action that is not understood is paragraph 2 whereat reference is made to "Inventions I and II". What are the inventions I and II? No previous identification of any inventions as "I" and "II" has been given. Moreover, nowhere in the Office action has it been set forth what the inventions are in which the claims are grouped. For example, with what invention is original claim 2 grouped?

In paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of the Office action, reference is made to different classification, different search, and separate status, but no specifics are given to support these aspects. What are the different classification areas (by class and subclass) and the different search areas?

Lastly, the statements made in paragraph 6 are not understood. As pointed out hereinabove, the newly submitted

claims involve solder stations and component leads which are soldered, and adhesive bonding is not a substitute for solder.

The Examiner has treated both original claims 1 and 2 as method claims, but they are not. Original claim 2 is an article (product) claim, just like new claims 3-6. Hence, Applicants have not canceled all original claims in favor of claims to different subject matter, as contended by the Examiner. Consequently, it is not clear what it is that is regarded as an "omission" or "correction" by the Examiner which needs to be supplied by Applicants, as stated in the last five lines on page 3 of the Office action.

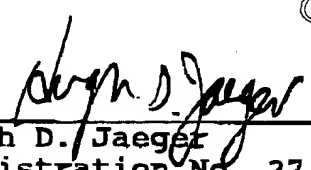
Clarification, therefore, is needed and is respectfully requested so that Applicants can determine precisely what it is that they need to do in order to provide a proper response if their previous response dated January 17, 2003, was in fact improper.

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Respectfully submitted,

HUGH D. JAEGER, P.A.

By


Hugh D. Jaeger
Registration No. 27,270
1000 Superior Blvd., Suite 302
Wayzata, MN 55391-1873
Telephone: 952-475-1880
Facsimile: 952-475-2930

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